Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application PCT/EP98/07059 filed November 5, 1998

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--

At page 2, line 16 thereof, delete "Description of the Invention" and insert therefor:

--BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention includes hypocholesteremic preparations comprising synergistic mixtures of phytostenols and/or phytostenol esters and conjugated fatty acids, and methods of reducing serum cholesterol levels in mammals through administration of such preparations.--

At page 2, line 32 thereof, insert:

--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--

At page 7, line 35 thereof, delete "Commercial applicability".

Please add new page 12, which is attached hereto, containing an Abstract of the Disclosure, following the claims.

In the Claims:

Please add new claims 11-30, as follow:

--11. (New) A method of reducing serum cholesterol content in a mammal, said method comprising:

(i) providing a hypocholesteremic preparation comprising at least one component (a) selected from the group consisting of phytostenols and phytostenol esters and at least one component (b) selected from conjugated fatty acids having from about 6 to about 24 carbon atoms and glycerides of conjugated fatty acids having from about 6 to about 24 carbon atoms; and

(ii) administering the hypocholesteremic preparation to a mammal in an amount effective to reduce serum cholesterol content in the mammal.--

--12. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one component (a) is selected from the group consisting of β-sitostenol, β-sitostanol, and esters thereof.--

--13. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one component (a) comprises a carboxylic acid ester of a phytostenol, the carboxylic acid being of the general formula (I):

$$R^1CO\text{-}OH \qquad (I)$$

wherein R^1CO represents an acyl radical having from about 2 to about 22 carbon atoms and up to about 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.--

--14. (New) The method according to claim 12, wherein the at least one component (a) comprises a carboxylic acid ester of β-sitostenol or β-sitostanol, the carboxylic acid being of the general formula (I):

$$R^1CO\text{-}OH \qquad (I)$$

wherein R^1CO represents an acyl radical having from about 2 to about 22 carbon atoms and up to about 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.--

--15. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein the carboxylic acid has from about 12 to about 18 carbon atoms.--

--16. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein the carboxylic acid has from about 12 to about 18 carbon atoms.--

--17. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the at least one

component (b) comprises conjugated linoleic acid.--

--18. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the hypocholesteremic preparation is encapsulated in gelatin, whereby a gelatin capsule is provided, prior to administering the preparation to the mammal.--

--19. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein the at least one component (a) and the at least one component (b) are each independently present in an amount of from about 0.1 to about 50% by weight, based on the total weight of the gelatin capsule.--

--20. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the hypocholesteremic preparation is combined with a foodstuff prior to administering the preparation to the mammal.--

--21. (New) A hypocholesteremic preparation comprising at least one component (a) selected from the group consisting of phytostenols and phytostenol esters and at least one component (b) selected from conjugated fatty acids having from about 6 to about 24 carbon atoms and glycerides of conjugated fatty acids having from about 6 to about 24 carbon atoms.--

--22. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 21, wherein the at least one component (a) is selected from the group consisting of β-sitostenol, β-sitostanol, and esters thereof.--

--23. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 21, wherein the at least one component (a) comprises a carboxylic acid ester of a phytostenol, the carboxylic acid being of the general formula (I):

$R^1CO\text{-}OH$ (I)

wherein R^1CO represents an acyl radical having from about 2 to about 22 carbon atoms and up to about 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.--

--24. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 22, wherein the at least one component (a) comprises a carboxylic acid ester of β-sitostenol or β-sitostanol, the carboxylic acid being of the general formula (I):

$R^1CO\text{-}OH$ (I)

wherein R^1CO represents an acyl radical having from about 2 to about 22 carbon atoms and up to about 3 carbon-carbon double bonds.--

--25. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 23, wherein the carboxylic acid has from about 12 to about 18 carbon atoms.--

--26. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 24, wherein the carboxylic acid has from about 12 to about 18 carbon atoms.--

--27. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 21, wherein the at least one component (b) comprises conjugated linoleic acid.--

--28. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 21, wherein the preparation is encapsulated in gelatin, in order to form a gelatin capsule.--

--29. (New) The hypocholesteremic preparation according to claim 28, wherein the at least one component (a) and the at least one component (b) are each independently present in an amount of from about 0.1 to about 50% by weight, based on the total weight of the gelatin capsule.--